



**Quarterly Report**  
**CROATIA: POLITICAL PARTY BUILDING & PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAM**  
**USAID Cooperative Agreement No. EE-A-00-98-00028-00**  
**October 1 to December 31, 2000**

**I. SUMMARY**

The Croatian elections of January 2000 saw more than 60 percent of the parliamentary seats and the presidency go to previously opposition, democratic political forces. Croatia then seized the opportunity to begin the process of consolidating its democratic transition by strengthening the country's institutions, including parliament. To that end, parliament recently ratified constitutional changes that modify the current government from a semi-presidential system to a parliamentary system. In addition, political parties have continued their preparations for the local elections to be held in May 2001.

Since 1995, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) has conducted programs in Croatia with the financial assistance of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support the long-term development of democratic political parties and, more recently, parliament. In March 2000, NDI launched a parliamentary development program to strengthen the capacity of members of parliament (MPs) to work in caucus, plenary and committees and with their constituencies. NDI has continued its political party building work to ensure that parties maintain their links with citizens at the local level.

Specifically, NDI's 2000 program pursued the following objectives:

- Political parties improve their infrastructure;
- Political parties are encouraged to be more inclusive of diverse members, particularly women and youth;
- Political parties improve their outreach capabilities;
- MPs strengthen parliamentary operations;
- Parliament becomes increasingly able to operate effectively as an institution;
- Parliamentary parties and MPs institute new channels of communication between other members and with their constituents; and
- Citizen groups begin to monitor the activities of parliament.

In this quarter NDI conducted the following activities in its political party, parliamentary and civic programs:

#### **Political Party Development Program**

- Completed trainings for the project Local Branch Office Development Part I, which focused on expanding and diversifying both the party electoral base and the candidate selections;
- Worked with the secretaries general of participating parties on the pre-assessment for Local Branch Office Development Part II to determine which local branch offices would participate;
- Began organizing events and consultations for Local Branch Office Development Part II, which demonstrate the concepts conveyed through Local Branch Office Development Part I and focus on improving internal party communication and increasing party visibility and credibility at the local level; and
- Conducted individual party consultations in preparation for upcoming local elections in May 2001.

#### **Parliamentary Development Program**

- Organized a meeting of women MPs who participated in study trips to Canada and the United States;
- Conducted a constituency relations workshop that focused on managing casework and establishing field offices;
- Conducted a series of communications workshops with MPs and individual party caucuses that focused on media relations and communication among caucuses and among coalition partners;
- Held meetings with committees to determine operational problems; and
- Continued working with parliament to utilize available resources within the institution.

#### **Civic Program**

- Continued to assist Citizens Organized to Monitor Elections (GONG) in developing a sustainable organizational structure; and
- Negotiated a subgrant for the period of October to December 2000.

## II. BACKGROUND

In the beginning of 2000, elections were held that swept into parliament the coalition of SDP/HSLs, relegating the HDZ to the opposition benches. During the past year, the international community heralded Croatia as a model of democratic political reform in the region. Following parliamentary and presidential elections in January and February, the government, led by Prime Minister Ivica Racan, has improved the international standing of Croatia, cooperated with the United Nation's war tribunal, supported freedom of the media, developed regional relations, improved the general atmosphere for the return of refugees, and worked to abolish discriminatory legislation. Croatia has acceded to NATO's Partnership for Peace and the World Trade Organization. The Council of Europe is winding down its monitoring mission, and Stabilization and Association (SAA) talks have begun with the European Union.

After months of political debate between the offices of the president and the prime minister, the parliament successfully instituted constitutional changes. The constitutional amendments will shift the powers of the state from the presidency to parliament, thus transforming Croatia from a semi-presidential system to a parliamentary system.

On December 17, the Zagreb district elections were held. However, voter turnout was only 16.43 percent, the lowest in Croatia election history. In retrospect, it seems that the district elections acted as an opinion poll showing the party ratings before the upcoming local elections. The success of the SDP with 22 to 37 percent of the vote shows that citizens still trust SDP and its leadership, and that the efforts of the government and its serious and honest approach were rewarded. The relative success of HDZ shows that citizens still perceive it as the only respectable alternative to the coalition of six, despite any scandals connected to it. HSS emerged as the third party, showing again that its main strength is at the local level, while HNS' popularity declined somewhat, possibly as a result of the fall in popularity of President Stepan Mesic and the constitutional reduction of his powers. Lastly, the HSLs experienced the most decline in support, with an average of 6 percent. The reason for this may be the unclear position of the party toward the government, in which it has one-fourth of the ministers.

Croatia's relations with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) have been marked by tense cooperation. On December 11, Prime Minister Racan held a press conference in which he stated the government's position on cooperation with the Hague Tribunal. After confirming that General Stipetic had been served with a summons to give a deposition, Racan outlined the broad strokes of the new policy, which has become known as the 13-Point Position paper. In this document, the government demands that ICTY investigate what it calls "concrete crimes" and not Croatian military operations carried out with the aim of liberating Croatian territory. Although the government, parliament and president's office are in agreement with this position, it has been received coolly by the international community and the Tribunal itself. Racan has extended an invitation to Chief War Crimes Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte to discuss the matter in the new year.

Long-term challenges remain in the institution-building process during the post-Tudjman era. One challenge is building a parliament that is free from autocratic control. Also important is the need to continue building political parties that are responsive and internally strengthened as a

means of perpetuating and further developing a multiparty system. NDI is continuing its work to develop these two key institutions – political parties and parliament.

### **III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

#### **Political Party Development Program**

The long-term goal of NDI's political party program is to provide political parties with the appropriate skills and expertise to represent constituent interests and to help them grow and develop as healthy political parties. To reach that goal, NDI's specific program objectives are the following:

- To improve the parties' infrastructure and organization;
- To encourage parties to be more inclusive of diverse members, particularly women and youth; and
- To improve the parties' outreach capabilities.

#### ***Local Branch Office Development***

The objectives of the political party development program have been met through an innovative project called Local Branch Office Development (LBOD), which encourages political parties to diversify and expand. The project was divided into three parts: Local Branch Office Development Part I; a pre-assessment for Local Branch Office Development Part II; and Local Branch Office Development Part II. LBOD Part I trainings build upon the work done by NDI with political parties during the past three years; these trainings focused on the need to diversify and expand the parties' electoral base as well as their candidate selections, with an eye toward increasing women and youth participation and their voter base. The goal of LBOD Part II is to create the opportunity for political parties to reach out to citizens and to expand and diversify through strategic development. This is done through public outreach events organized by political parties, with assistance and consultation from NDI.

#### ***Local Branch Office Development Part I***

Local Branch Office Development Part I was designed to set the tone for the new political mindset needed for the upcoming municipal elections in Spring 2001. Trainings were conducted from May through mid-October and focused on enhancing internal party organization and improving public outreach capabilities. Party activists were encouraged to:

- *Consider the need for diversity at all levels within the party.* Specifically, there was a focus on enlarging the definition of a party voter and diversifying the list of candidates for the election in Spring 2001.
- *Understand the need for the local branch to improve its visibility and credibility within its own community.* This involved encouraging voter outreach, cooperation with sister organizations in the same electoral district, and cooperation with NGOs and labor unions with similar goals of enlarging the party's volunteer and voter base.

- *Include their banner carriers (MPs, party leadership, government representatives, local elected officials and local party leaders) as another component of their work to increase their voter base.*

### **SDP – Zadar**

NDI worked with 13 members of the SDP, including youth members and party activists, in Zadar on September 30 (see Appendix B for a participant list). An SDP MP introduced the NDI program and participated in the seminar, which trained the participants on various Get-Out-The-Vote methods. The participants then agreed to disseminate this information to other party activists.

### **HNS – Sisak**

The HNS has been working to restructure the party into one that is more modern and moderate. To that end, the president of the party decided to restructure the party at the local level and has consulted with NDI for assistance. On October 4, NDI conducted a training on increasing party visibility and credibility for 21 party activists (see Appendix B for a participant list). Topics included running an effective campaign, increasing party membership and voter outreach.

### **HSLs – Osijek**

A workshop was held with the HSLs in Osijek, which was attended by 36 party activists and the local MP (see Appendix B for a participant list). A total of 15 young party members attended the training session. Topics focused on internal and external communication, strategic development of voter outreach activities, and methods for increasing party credibility and visibility.

### ***Pre-Assessment for Local Branch Office Development Part II***

Upon completion of LBOD Part I, all participants were given homework to create a three-month plan of activities for increasing visibility and credibility of the LBO within its community. Based on consultations with and reports from the local branch offices as well as the completion of the homework, the political party training team was able to determine which local branch offices were ready to move into the next cycle.

Prior to the start of LBOD Part II, NDI met with the secretary general of each political party with which the Institute worked and gave them candid feedback on the local offices that participated in LBOD Part I. The political party team worked with the Secretary General in determining the areas where there were problems and which branch offices would be involved in LBOD Part II.

## ***Local Branch Office Development Part II***

LBOD Part II events began in November and are ongoing. They function as a tool to demonstrate the principles learned in LBOD Part I. NDI provides consultation and training as needed; the needs of the parties are determined through the consultations with local branch officials and the party secretary general. LBOD Part II events are designed to:

- Improve the communication and relationship between the different levels within the party structure, such as the party headquarters, MPs, government representatives, local elected officials, local leadership and party activists; and
- Increase the party's visibility and credibility at the local level.

To that end, NDI activities have focused on assisting parties in increasing their communication skills, both internal and external, working with parties to develop strategies for media relations, and assisting parties in improving their external appearance. LBOD Part II events are planned by the specific local branch office, which determines the agenda and the mechanics of conducting each event. The branch offices receive the necessary resources and make the invitations to the appropriate government representatives. After each event, an evaluation is done and participants discuss the strengths of the event and the lessons learned. Where appropriate, NDI provides communications training in areas deemed necessary by the political party central leadership or local branch office.

### **SDP – Tresnjevka**

On November 10, NDI conducted a training with the SDP in Tresnjevka South and North on the mechanics of running an effective voter campaign. The training was attended by five party activists, who were encouraged to reach out to other party activists and share the information they received from NDI.

### **LS – Rijeka**

On November 21, the LS conducted a voter outreach event in Rijeka. Local party activists, party officials, local elected officials, MPs, the minister of the environment, LBO leadership, women, youth and party colleagues from Daruvar, as well as two women's NGOs took part in this event, distributing party information, going door-to-door and answering questions. Local branch offices from different electoral districts were also present. In the center of town, the Rijeka LS local branch office distributed the LS declaration, names and phones numbers for contacts, leaflets, a petition, and an invitation letter to join the party. Local newspapers and a radio station covered the event.

### **HSS**

The HSS consulted with NDI on its problems with the media, party public presentations, and the party image. Present at the HSS consultations were MPs, party media and marketing strategists, and the secretary general and the vice-president of the HSS (see Appendix B for a

participant list). NDI advised them on strategies for working with the media. In addition, the HSS worked with NDI on organizing a party media group within the party headquarters.

## **HNS**

The HNS approached NDI for assistance with marketing and publicizing a change in the party image. The party is eager to increase its youth membership and many young people have recently joined the party, including a number of young women. NDI provided assistance and information for the marketing group, which will develop the party's public presentation and relationship with the media (please see Appendix B for a participant list).

## **IDS – Pula and Umag**

On November 25, the IDS, with NDI assistance, conducted constituency outreach events in Pula and Umag, where they distributed party information and applications and solicited questions from the constituents for the MPs. These events involved local party activists, the president of the local party branch, MPs, the secretary general, and the minister for European integration.

## **SDSS – Glina**

NDI worked with the Independent Democratic Serb Party (SDSS) in Glina (Tuposko) on techniques and methods of organizing and campaigning with party activists. Because there were issues with other SDSS local branch offices on NDI's programs, the political party team clearly outlined to the party leadership prior to this training that it could provide technical information and share it with people but could not organize branch offices and solve legal minority issues. The SDSS leadership then made an effort to reach out to volunteers and to organize local branch offices. As a result, NDI was able to provide effective training with this local branch office on party organization and campaigning.

## **SDP – Varazdin**

On December 8, the SDP local branch office in Varazdin, with assistance from NDI, organized a voter outreach event. Attending this event were local party activists, a local MP, the vice-president of the party and the secretary general. The SDP organized an information center in the middle of the town, providing party information and refreshments. In addition, they conducted a door-to-door voter outreach session.

## ***American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS)***

The ACILS invited NDI to participate in its International Women Trade Union School in Rovinj from October 10 through 14 with approximately 65 participants from the Central East European region. NDI conducted a workshop entitled "Women and Political Action," which focused on women as political activists and how to lobby effectively.

### ***Political Party Consultations***

In preparation for the upcoming elections in May 2001, NDI held a number of consultations with the HSLS, HSU, SDSS, SDP, and the HSS. The focus of the consultations was on developing such strategies as improving external and internal communication, developing party leadership, and refining organizational development, all of which NDI will subsequently help the parties address.

### **Parliamentary Development Program**

The long-term goal of the parliamentary program is to strengthen the institution of parliament and build the parliament's institutional capacity. To that end, the programs objectives are the following:

- MPs strengthen parliamentary operations;
- Parliament improves its ability to operate effectively as an institution;
- Parliamentary parties and MPs institute new channels of communication between other members and with their constituents; and
- Citizen groups begin to monitor the activities of the parliament.

### ***Women in Parliament***

On October 4, NDI brought together the women MPs who participated in the study trip to Canada and the women MPs who traveled to the U.S. during the summer. This was an opportunity for the women to reflect on their work in a relaxed atmosphere, develop networks and start thinking about long-term institutional issues. In addition, the women were able to share experiences from their respective travels to Canada and the U.S. The most important outcome was that the MPs agreed they would like to meet on a monthly basis when parliament is in session. NDI agreed to organize and host the events. The group decided to leave open the possibility of expanding the list to other women members of parliament.

### ***Constituency Relations Workshop: "The Role of the MP in the Field: Coping with Casework and How to Establish Field Office."***

During the weekend of October 14 and 15, 2000, NDI held a workshop in Plitvice on establishing constituency offices as a follow-up to its June constituency relations seminar, at which MPs explained that due to limited resources they could not take on fieldwork. The trainers were Jim Higgins (MP/Ireland), Ross Reid (former Canadian MP and director of NDI/Kosovo), Vilm Herman (MP/Osijek) and Romano Mestrovic (MP/Zadar).

The objective of the workshop was to have MPs understand their role in their district offices and to provide concrete skills in opening and managing district offices with scarce resources. The participants were introduced to the casework practices of MPs from Canada, Ireland, and Croatia. The trainers shared their experiences of how an MP can identify resources through parliament, how an MP can access its own party and volunteer networks, and how an MP can start to manage individual casework in a practical way.



Seminar participants constituted a diverse group (see Appendix B for a participant list), with members coming from five parties, representing many regions (Slavonia, Dalmatia, Istria, Sisak and Zagreb) and spanning the gamut in terms of age and experience. In attendance were third-term MPs, first-term MPs who had worked with their parties for years in order to be on their party lists, and young first-term MPs who, due to low positions on their party lists, never expected to be elected. The seminar provided an unexpected opportunity for older, more experienced MPs to mentor younger ones and brought to light various strategies for constituency work used by Croatian MPs that had never been shared with their colleagues (see Appendix A for the workshop agenda).

### ***Communications Workshop and Consultations***

In November, NDI conducted a series of communications instruction with members of parliament. The main component of the program was a multiparty workshop on internal and external communications on November 18, 2000, to introduce MPs to communication techniques for intra-parliamentary communication (among respective caucuses and among coalition partners) as well as media relations. The training focused on how members communicate their message from party caucus to the floor plenary, which is often broadcast live on national television, and how to develop a media strategy.

The participants were a mix of first-time members and members who had served one or more terms in office. Representatives of GONG and the parliamentary public affairs bureau were invited, and GONG participated. The bureau initially confirmed their attendance, but did not appear for the workshop. (See Appendix A for the workshop agenda).

Individual party caucus communications consultations took place with the SDP, HSLS and the HSP (see Appendix B for participant lists). MPs were given an opportunity to vent their frustrations about dealing with the media. NDI then moved them into a discussion of their current communication practices and guided them to consider the need for a communication strategy.

### ***Other Party and Member Consultations***

During the month of October, NDI provided research to the SDP and the HSLS caucuses regarding the drafting of legislation on family violence, drugs, and proposed criminal code amendments on hooliganism. Throughout the quarter, individual consultations were held with the following members: Vilim Herman (Chair of the Elections and Public Administration Committee); Bojan Klapcic (Caucus Secretary IDS); Petar Turcinovic (MP IDS); Igor Dekanic (Domestic Policy Advisor for President Mesic); Miloslav Pecevski (MP HSS); and Ivo Skrabalo (Chair of the Inter-parliamentary Relations Committee). In December NDI met with various MPs to discuss a wide range of issues, in particular the role of committees in parliament and resources in parliament.

### ***Resources in Parliament – Consultations***

NDI is working to help parliament identify needs and use available resources. The Committee for Information, Informatisation and Media was created in June 2000; however, it has not yet been constituted due to the inability of the coalition of six to elect a committee chair. Despite this fact, NDI has continued to consult with individual MPs who work with these issues with technicians in the Sabor. The primary issue is that parliament needs an information network. At the moment, proposals are sent electronically to the speaker's office where they are printed and cease to be available in electronic form. A new information model has been proposed, and 70 percent of the system is now complete. Most of the hardware network has been laid, but training is required as well as the development of political will to push the project through to completion.

The parliamentary development program has also mapped out the following assets and resources within the parliament: expert services; the Public Affairs Bureau; libraries; reading and information room; and relationships with universities.

### **Civic Program**

During this quarter, activities with Citizens Organized to Monitor Elections (GONG) continued to focus on assisting GONG in developing a sustainable organizational structure. To that end, a subgrant from NDI to GONG was approved for the period of October to December 2000. An extension of the subgrant for 2001 has been approved.

NDI has met with GONG on a weekly basis for the purposes of exchanging information and reviewing issues and activity plans that were formulated in GONG's workplan. In addition, NDI provides technical and strategic assistance with GONG's parliamentary visits, organization of public meetings with MPs and monitoring elections.

## **IV. RESULTS**

### **Political Party Program**

Local branch offices have established good working relationships with their elected officials and government representatives and will use them in their efforts to connect with more voters. As a result of the Local Branch Office Development seminars and events, participating local branch offices have accomplished the following:

- *Staged four voter contact activities in Rijeka, Pula, Umag and Varazdin.* In addition, at each event the party made a commitment to hold at least three additional voter outreach activities prior to the Spring 2001 elections.
- *Invited and worked with a total of three sister organizations from different electoral units, two of which went on to stage their own voter outreach events independently of NDI.* For example, the LS branch office from Daruvar, which worked with its sister organization during the event in Rijeka, independently organized an event on December 23.

- *Improved voter contact and media relations.* A total of six press conferences were held as a result of party communications work with NDI through LBOD Part II. The HSS held its first press conference outside party headquarters one week after receiving media relations training from NDI. As a direct result of voter contact activities conducted by the parties, they received extensive earned media coverage from twelve different outlets in television, newspaper and radio.
- *Invited and worked with a total of ten MPs from their electoral units in the local areas, representatives of the government in their local areas, including the mayors from Osijek, Daruva, and Pula, nine representatives from the respective party's leadership, and two government ministers.* A total of sixteen MPs, government officials, party headquarters staff and local elected officials went door-to-door and sought out voters in marketplaces and town centers.
- *Invited and worked with four other branch offices within their electoral units.* During the events in Rijeka and Pula, volunteers from other local branch offices participated in voter outreach activities.
- *Invited and worked with NGOs that share similar values and goals.* At the LS event in Rijeka, two women's NGOs, Zenska Infoteka and O-Zona, sent volunteers to participate.
- *Included women and youth in the project activities.* A total of 18 women and 32 youth members took part in the LBOD Part I during this quarter. In addition, 20 women and youth members took part in the planning, staging and implementation of the LBOD Part II events.

The LBOD Part II activity has yielded the following result for the local staff:

- The assessment portion of the LBOD Part II event planning has been a training tool for the local staff as political organizers and trainers. Part of the consultation and provision of resources is done by NDI local staff via telephone conversations and an assessment meeting. The meeting takes place one week or more prior to the event to ensure all of the planning and logistics are well underway and to provide whatever refinements are necessary.

The MPs and government representatives have been responsive to the local branch offices. The cooperation between local branch offices, MPs, government representatives, elected officials and central political parties has had the following results:

- MPs and government representatives participated in voter contact activities, such as door-to-door outreach and indicated their desire to do this type of work again. In one example, the Minister of the Environment participated in door-to-door canvassing for the first time at an LS event in Rijeka. Although reluctant to meet with citizens at first, he soon overcame his apprehensions and engaged in discussions. During the evaluation he stated, *"I cannot believe that citizens reacted in such a positive way during the action door to door!"* Miroslav Korenika, an SDP MP, expressed his desire to participate in door-to-door canvassing again, stating, *"I like door to door activities and wherever you organize these kind of events, please call me and I will be happy to come."*
- Several of the MPs were so impressed by the event that they invited NDI to their hometowns to help stage an LBOD Part II event. The most notable has been Zlatko

Kramaric, the mayor of Osijek and a recipient of the 1997 NDI Democracy Award. He participated in the LS event in Rijeka and the following week organized an LBOD II event in Osijek. Kramaric was recently elected president of the LS and stated that his rise to victory began with his work with NDI at the LBOD Part II event.

- After conducting the SDP event in Varazdin, all of the participants agreed that the event improved the communication between the different levels within the party (HQ, government, local elected officials, different LBOs and party activists) and increased the party's visibility and credibility in the local community.
- The IDS currently has a team working on the responses to the inquiries that were raised during their voter outreach event; the team will answer the simple questions from the citizens, questions for the MPs will be forwarded to their attention with recommended responses as appropriate, and questions that concern local matters will be forwarded to the city government. Since this LBOD II event, IDS has visited 12 cities in the Istria region and has distributed in excess of 5,000 leaflets on human rights and 3,000 party questionnaires.

NDI's continued cooperation with other NGOs, unions, and civic organizations had the following result:

- NDI is approaching the American Center for Labor Solidarity about possible co-ventures in 2001. As the political program looks toward the elections in Spring 2001 and the need to increase linkages between parties and public organizations, the expertise of the Solidarity Center is necessary and important.

### **Parliamentary Development Program**

The Constituency Relations workshop bore both concrete results and changes in perceptions and attitudes.

- SDP member, Romano Mestrovic discovered that his HDZ colleague Zeljko Krapljan could help him with casework in his constituency in Karin.
- Ljiljana Khuta (SDP) currently covers a small segment of her constituency working from home and using her mom as a secretary. She now has decided to find space at the market place where she can engage in direct voter contact.
- HSS member, Stejepan Dehin, is currently using the NDI Walk and Talk Manual that his wife received while participating in an early NDI political party program. He uses the manual and questionnaire as a means of dealing with citizens.
- Marija Lugaric (SDP) was impressed by Vilim Herman's description of traveling offices. Prior to the seminar, she believed that practices shared from trainers abroad could not be successfully transplanted in Croatia. She is now open to new activities. *"It is always valuable to hear the experiences of other people. The useful thing is that it makes me think 'how am I going to do it!' So, I intend to make a plan with weekly and monthly activities and goals. In addition to seeing what I need, I must work for what I want."*
- Many participants changed their perceptions about working space. Instead of complaining that space is not being provided, they now understand that space can be

created anywhere, especially in a public forum. All one needs is a place where people can come and talk.

- MPs came to understand that all that is needed for to start communication is a telephone, and all already have a mobile phone and free post provided for by the Sabor. MPs also agreed to access the ad hoc secretarial services at the Sabor. GONG representatives present at the workshop offered assistance to improve communications with constituents.

The parliamentary communications consultations yielded the following results:

- Party caucuses acknowledged they do little to communicate directly with the media; they expect the media to cover them in a fair and positive way without any assistance from the caucus. After much discussion, attitudes were changed. Members saw the problems facing them and realized the need to develop strategies for their respective caucuses. They especially saw the need for designated spokespeople and message meetings.

The parliamentary communications workshop yielded the following results:

- Members' perspectives were changed about the necessity for internal and external communication strategies. Jadranka Katarincic (HSLs) said, *"I am very pleased – the seminar is going to be very useful to me. It is the first time I have had an opportunity to attend this kind of training. I am always focused on content (what I am going to say) and not how I communicate, how it looks. I especially liked the piece on journalists' ambushes – it was something I never thought about and this workshop has helped prepare me for future encounters."*
- MPs saw opportunities to improve their work in other areas with the skills gained at the workshop. Boja Klapić (Secretary of the IDS Parliamentary Caucus) said, *"The seminar was excellent and informative. I will also apply the strategies on public services outside of politics, such as health services."*
- Participants from GONG were able to sharpen their skills as well as gain greater access to MPs. Aleksandra Kuratko (GONG) noted, *"The seminar was quite useful and I will definitely use the message box system in my future work. . . . Also, the seminar got us closer with MPs which will be useful for our parliamentary program. I have, of course, advocated our issues thoroughly."*

## **Civic Program**

In order to assist GONG in becoming an independently sustainable organization, NDI continues to provide technical assistance through a subgrant and regular consultations. During this quarter GONG was thus able to accomplish the following:

- Continued organizing a parliamentary internship program, including soliciting the needs of MPs, requesting permission for the internship program from the president of the Sabor, and cooperating with other regional NGOs who have set up internship programs.
- Organized eight "Citizens Hours," which are public meetings with MPs and government officials. Currently 26 MPs have agreed to participate in this program, including President Mesic.

- Conducted tours of the Sabor. During the month of November, for example, 141 citizens took the tours.
- Observed six local assembly sessions in Zagreb, Rijeka, Zadar and Bakar.
- Became members of and actively participated in two working groups in the government office for NGOs. These working groups discussed and made proposals for new laws regarding the taxation of NGOs as well as for new conditions for the Croatian government to finance NGOs.

## **V. EVALUATION**

NDI has fulfilled the indicators set out in the six-month workplan covering the period from June to December 2000. These indicators focused on increasing women and youth participation in the democratic process, improving internal and external communication, improving constituent relations, and assisting the development of GONG into a sustainable civic organization. During the next quarter, NDI will evaluate the implementation of the July to December 2000 workplan.

### **Political Party Program**

In several of the areas, the local branch offices did not complete their homework assignments or implement many of the suggestions and recommendations their party activists generated in the workshop sessions. During mid-year conversations with the secretary generals, NDI shared its reservations about the leadership of these branch offices and was told that the parties would be working with these branches to affect change.

### **Parliamentary Development Program**

On November 15 and 16, NDI President Ken Wollack met with the president of Croatia, the prime minister of the Sabor, the speaker of the Sabor, and the secretaries general of the parties with which NDI works. These meetings were a testament to the success NDI has had in fostering relationships with political parties and institutions and in assisting in the development of democracy in this region.

During these meetings, the president, prime minister, speaker and deputy foreign minister were warm and complementary about NDI's work in Croatia. Speaker Tomcic expressed his commitment to ongoing cooperation with NDI and will initiate discussions with members of the parliamentary development team about the possibilities of a material assistance program. Prime Minister Racan expressed interest in cross-border support and asked if NDI could facilitate bringing together regional counterparts. In another meeting, Ivo Skrabalo, MP and chair of the Committee for Interparliamentary Relations, offered his committee as a point of contact for the parliamentary development program.

### **Civic Program**

NDI continued to evaluate the needs of GONG as it develops a sustainable organizational structure. GONG has been successful in fundraising, having received monies from the Canadian

Embassy, the Westminster Foundation and the Mott Foundation. However, it is crucial that GONG receive the resources and knowledge in order to be able to manage these funds.

## **VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

The activities of the past eight months have laid the foundation for the work of NDI in Croatia during 2001. The political party and parliamentary programs intend to work together to ensure that linkages are developed and maintained between:

- MP's and the local branch offices;
- Local elected officials and the MPs;
- Local branch offices and the local, county and national governments;
- Voters and their elected officials at the local, county and national levels; and
- Local branch offices, NGOs and unions.

Building upon the confidence of the branch offices and the MPs as well as their success in reaching out to voters, NDI will continue to work with the parties and parliament to improve party diversity, constituency relations and communications at the local, county and national levels. NDI will also continue to provide technical assistance to GONG as it develops its organizational structure and oversight programs.

### **Political Party Program**

During the first quarter of 2001, NDI will continue conducting the Local Branch Office Development Part II seminars. In preparation for the upcoming elections, NDI will also work with political parties on strategies for including women and youth in leadership positions and on candidate's lists. Finally, NDI will conduct seminars addressing local election readiness and will observe and advise on local election campaigns.

### **Parliamentary Development Program**

The main problem facing the committees in the Sabor is the lack of necessary authority within the institution. Committee work is seen as *pro forma*, and many view sending a proposal to committee as simply following the rules of procedure, nothing more. While some committees have provisions for experts to sit as committee members, this is still seen as a *pro forma* activity. There is no sense of what the work of a committee should be. There is no attempt to understand how the proposed legislation would function or operate and no attempt to model effects or understand consequences of legislation. This results in poorly written legislation and requires numerous amendments or complete rewrites. As Vilim Herman explains, "*We do not know how committees work elsewhere – we need models of functioning committees who do the work of parliament.*"

To address this problem, NDI will work with committees to improve the following areas: opening committees to the public; instructing committees on how to initiate public policy debate and develop public mechanisms within themselves; having an active relationship with the government; improving communication between committees; defining the role of the committee

chair; and developing specific rules of procedure. In the next quarter, the parliamentary development program will hold a workshop on strengthening the role of committees.

NDI will also distribute materials on the mechanics of holding a public hearing. NDI will work with the speaker's office and individual MPs to assess the institutional needs of the Sabor and begin to identify the kinds of concrete material assistance needed.

### **Civic Program**

During the first quarter of 2001, NDI will train members of GONG on managing funds from multiple grant sources. In addition, GONG will submit a budget and workplan for 2001 to NDI, outlining its planned activities for the year. NDI will continue to administer the subgrant and meet regularly with GONG representatives.



*APPENDIX A*

**WORKSHOP AGENDAS**

**Constituency Relations Workshop: Plitvice, Croatia  
October 14-15, 2000**

**“The Role of the MP in the Field: Coping with Casework and How to Establish Field Offices”**

**Workshop Agenda**

**Friday October 14, 2000**

- 18:00            Arrival of Delegates: Plitvice, Croatia
- 19:00            Welcome Reception
- 20:00            Dinner

**Saturday: October 15, 2000**

- 9:00-9:30        Coffee
- 9:30-10:00       Introductions
- 10:00-11:30      **The role of the MP in the field: Why work in the field after the election?  
Irish experience and the Croatian experience:**
- Deal with casework-real problems
  - Getting feedback and information from voters
  - Giving a human face to Parliament
- 11:30-12:00      Coffee
- 12:00-13:00      **Discussion and exchange of experience: Working in the field in Croatia  
Small group exercise: Recognize barriers and identify solutions**
- 13:00-15:00      Lunch
- 15:00 –15:30      **Canadian Experience: MP’s work in their ridings: Ross Reid**
- 15:30-16:30      **Different kinds of casework  
Examples from Ireland; Canada; Croatia**
- 16:30-16:45      Coffee
- 16:45-18:00      **How to measure successful casework? What is a successful conclusion-What of those  
problems/issues that cannot be resolved by the MP.**
- 19:00            Dinner

**Sunday: October 15, 2000**

- 9:00-9:30        Recap from Saturday
- 9:30-10:30       **The Mechanics of doing casework: Setting up an office in your electoral district  
What resources can you use in your electoral district now?  
Traveling clinics**

10:30-11:00	<b>Small group work-Developing strategies and finding help to manage and maintain your electoral district office: tracking issues and reporting- use of newsletters, letters and other materials.</b>
11:00-11:15	Pauza
11:15-12:00	<b>How to share the workload: Reaching out to community groups, schools, NGO's trade unions for help</b>
12:00-13:00	Follow up and planning next steps
13:00	LUNCH AND GOODBYES

**Parliamentary Communications Workshop: Zagreb, Croatia  
November 18, 2000**

**Workshop Agenda**

9:00-9:30	Coffee
9:30-10:00	Introductions
10:00-11:15	<b>Internal Communications within Parliament</b> How to develop a communications strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Designation of specific spokespersons</li><li>• Spokespersons identified issues</li></ul>
11:15-11:30	Coffee
11:30-13:00	<b>External Communication</b> What Makes News? Why Bother Dealing with Reporters? [very brief] <b>Message</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Definition=Clear, Concise, Convincing; Development; Use of Themes</li><li>• Message Box</li><li>• Audience: Targeting; Persuadables</li><li>• Message Delivery: Repetition; Choosing Outlets; Staying 'On Message'</li></ul>
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:00	<b>Developing a Pro-Active Media Strategy</b> Press Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reporters</li><li>• Press Lists</li><li>• Basic Guidelines for Dealing with Press Corps</li><li>• 'Rules of the Road'</li><li>• 'Working' of a Story</li></ul>
15:00-15:15	Coffee
15:15-16:15	<b>Handling Electronic Media</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applying the Inverted Pyramid to Interviews</li><li>• Radio: Audience Segmentation [very brief]</li><li>• Television: Distribute My Handout, 'Television: A Basic How To...'</li></ul>
16:15-17:00	<b>Attacks and Ambushes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responding to Negatives, Using the 'Bridging Technique'</li><li>• Crisis Management</li><li>• The Ambush: Best Escape Paths</li><li>• Handling Factual and Other Errors</li></ul>
17:00	Finish

*APPENDIX B*

**PARTICIPANT LIST**

**Constituency Relations Workshop**

**October 14-15, 2000**

1. Vilim Herman, MP, HSLS
2. Romano Mestrovic, MP, SDP
3. Dino Debeljuh, MP, IDS
4. Emil Soldatic, MP, IDS
5. Marija Lugaric, MP, SDP
6. Ljiljana Kuhta, MP, SDP
7. Stjepan Dehin, MP, HSS
8. Zdenka Cunhil, Chair of National Minorities Caucus, HSS
9. Zeljko Glavan, MP, HSLS
10. Igor Bajok, GONG

**Consultations with Parliamentary Caucuses**

**SDP Caucus**

**November 21, 2000**

1. Milanka Opacic, MP, Deputy Chair of the Caucus
2. Mirjana Didovic, MP
3. Nenad Stazic, MP
4. Ratko Maricic, MP, Chair of SDP Caucus in House of Counties
5. Katica Sedmak, MP
6. Sanja Kapetanovic, MP

**HSLS Caucus**

**November 22, 2000**

1. Darinka Orel, MP
2. Jadranko Mijalic, MP, Chair of the Committee for Finance and Budget
3. Viktor Broz, MP
4. Zrinjka Glovacki Bernardi, MP, Deputy Chair of the Caucus
5. Melita Kovacevic, party member, public speech consultant

**HSP Caucus**

**November 28, 2000**

1. Anto Dapic, MP, Caucus Chair
2. Tonci Tadic, MP
3. Vlado Jukic, MP
4. Miroslav Rozic, MP, House of Counties

**Local Branch Office Development Part I**

**SDP - Zadar**

**September 30, 2000**

**13 Participants, including:**

1. Romano Mestrovic, MP
2. Zoran Dragovic, member of Youth Forum SDP
3. Natasa Vucic, President of county organization Youth Forum SDP Zadarska County
4. Omerka Saric, President of city organization Zadar, Councilor in City Council
5. Ratko-Nedjeljko Dunatov, President of municipal organization Preko, Councilor in Municipal Council and Deputy Sheriff of Preko

6. Kristian Kapovic, President of municipal organization Vir

**HNS - Sisak**

**October 4, 2000**

**21 Participants, including:**

1. Marija Bilman, Secretary of Local Branch Office, County President
2. Igor Lovrekovic, President of Youth in Moscenica
3. Matea Mesic, Administrative Secretary
4. Marina Sertic, Party Member

**HSLs - Osijek**

**October 8, 2000**

**36 Participants, including:**

1. Zoran Ozimec, Secretary of county organization Osijek, Kotar Councilor
2. Igor Juric, President of local branch office Bilje
3. Sladan Stanusic, Secretary of city organization Dakovo
4. Vladimir Lukic, Secretary of local branch Koska
5. Jean Pierre Maricic, President of city organization Osijek
6. Vilim Herman, MP
7. Branko Lackovic, Member of Great Board of HSLs

#### **Local Branch Office Development Part II - Media and Communications Training**

**HSS**

**November 23, 2000**

1. Josip Panduric, Editor of HSS Book
2. Sergej Spehar, Media Chair
3. Zvonimir Sabati, MP, Vice President
4. Stanko Grcic, Secretary General
5. Ilija Coric
6. Bozena Perak, Administrative Secretary
7. Darko Till, International Secretary

**HNS**

**November 23, 2000**

1. Boris Blazekovic
2. Boris Ljubcic
3. Danijel Babic
4. Franjo Mesic
5. Helena Miladic
6. Manuela Sola
7. Kresimir Osrecki
8. Mislav Zagar
9. Sonja Konig
10. Arnela Spahic